

**IN THE DRAWINGS:**

The attached drawing includes changes to FIG. 3. This sheet replaces the original sheet that included FIG. 3 as originally filed. In FIG. 3, the element "173b" has been renumbered "173a" to accord with the discussion in the specification. Also attached is an annotated sheet that highlights the change made to FIG. 3.

Attachments: Replacement Sheet

Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

### **REMARKS**

Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-20 remain pending in the present Patent Application. Applicants request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the following remarks.

In item 3 of the Office Action, the drawings were objected to due to an error noted in FIG. 3. A Replacement Sheet depicting a corrected FIG. 3 is attached hereto. Accordingly, Applicants request that the objection to the drawings in this regard be withdrawn.

In item 4 of the Office Action, an error was noted in that a reference number appearing in the drawings did not appear in the specification. An appropriate amendment to the specification is made above to correct this error. Accordingly, Applicants request that the objection to the drawings in this regard be withdrawn.

Next, in items 5-9 of the Office Action, claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the US Patent Application entitled "System and Method for Distributed Processing filed on March 6, 2001 (Application Number 09/799,381) by Jia and subsequently published as US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 in combination with US Patent References 6,718,329 (Selvin); 6,360,252 (Rudy et al); 6,101,510 (Stone et al.); 20030041110 (Wenocur et al.); 5,974,346 (Poledna); and/or 6,380,935 (Heeschen et al.). Applicants assert that the rejection of claims 1-20 is improper as US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 by Jia is disqualified as a reference as provided by 35 U.S.C. §103(c).

Specifically, 35 U.S.C. §103(c) provides:

"Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under one or more of subsections (e), (f), and (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person."

US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 qualifies as prior art only under §102(e)(1). Given that the invention that is the subject of the present application and the subject matter of US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 by Jia were owned by the same entity at the time the present invention was made, then US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 is disqualified as prior art under §103(c). In this respect, a statement is provided in the

following section that at the time of the invention of the present application was made, both the subject matter of US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 and the present invention that is the subject of the present Patent Application were owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same person or entity.

In view of the fact that US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 is hereby disqualified for use as a prior art reference under §103, Applicants assert that the rejection of claims 1-20 as being unpatentable over US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 in combination with other references is improper. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-20 be withdrawn.

**STATEMENT OF COMMON OWNERSHIP UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(c)**

Applicants hereby state that both the subject matter of US Patent Application Publication US/2002/0129097A1 and the present invention that is the subject of the present Patent Application were, at the time the present invention was made, owned by the same person or entity, or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person or entity.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicants respectfully request that all outstanding objections and rejections be withdrawn and that this application and all presently pending claims be allowed to issue. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding Applicants' response, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicants' undersigned counsel.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. D'Aurelio

Reg. No. 40,977

D'Aurelio & Mathews, LLC  
5755 Granger Road, Suite 365  
Cleveland, Ohio 44131  
Phone: (216) 459-8302  
Fax: (216) 459-8301

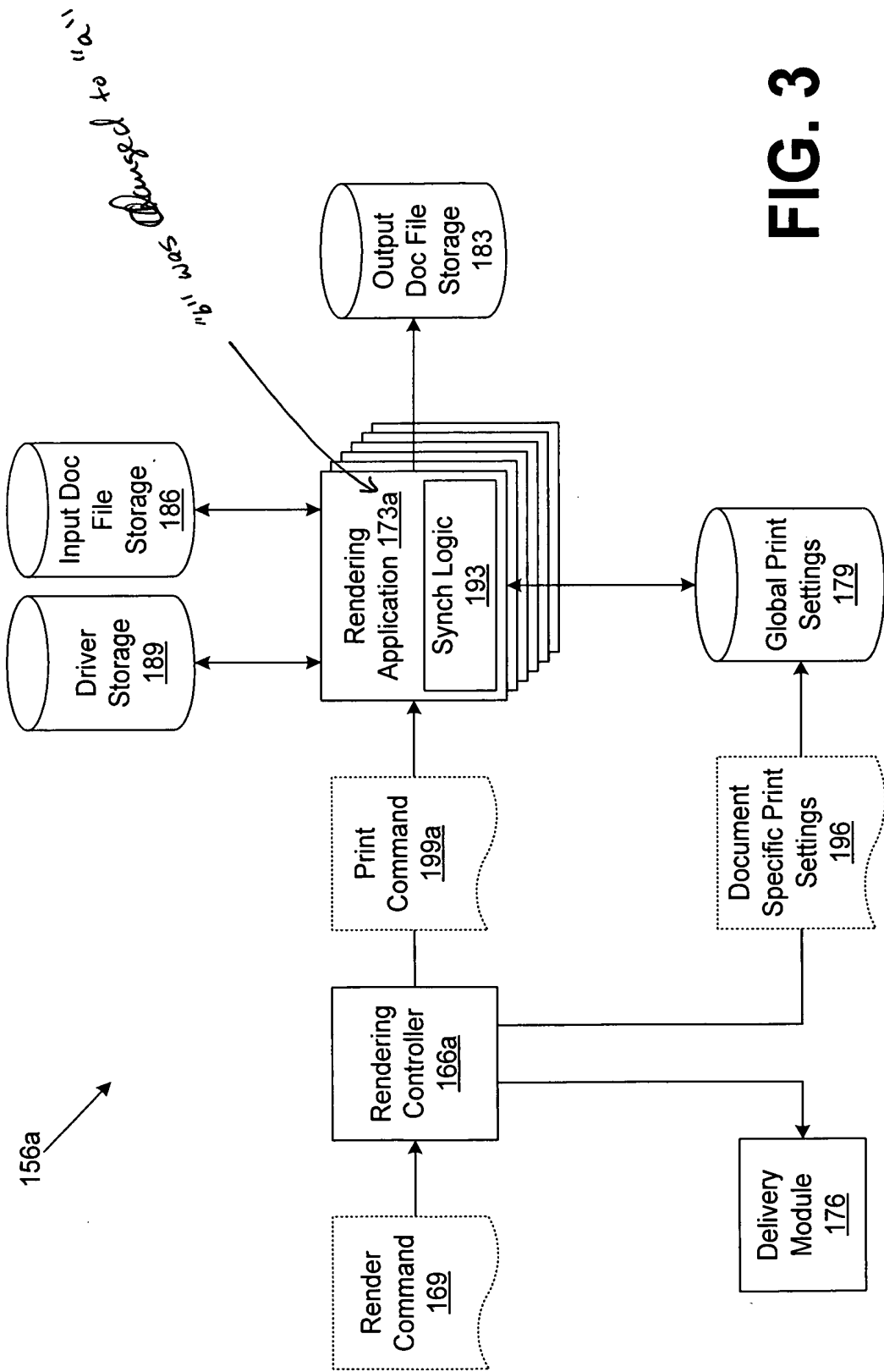


FIG. 3